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sacrifice was still practised in the Small Islands on certain ritual occasions till put a stop to by the white man, and is still practised on the Malekulan mainland, this does not form part of the ritual of the Maki itself, which, by the substitution of tusked boars, is held by the natives to constitute the main force in their culture making for peace.

Details of the procedure accompanying the sacrifice of these animals will be given in later chapters. This brief summary of their ritual importance is given here only to explain the immense value attached to them and the amount of time and care spent in their rearing. Not only are they reared at home, however; for trade in pigs is also the chief motive for the voyages undertaken by the Small Islanders in their seagoing canoes to the distant islands of Oba and Raga to the east, to Malo in the north as well as southward to Ambrim and the east coast of Malekula.

Tusked boars are also used, while alive, as currency. For, despite the elaborate ritual life that goes on in these islands, the Malekulan, not excluding the Small Islander, is nothing if not commercially minded, driving hard bargains, exacting the highest possible price for his daughters from their suitors, lending pigs out on loan, receiving high fees for the performance of magical rites, cures and other services; and, above all, in one of the most interesting ways of amassing wealth, namely the institution of copyright by which new songs and dances and even new forms of ritual are passed on from one individual or community to another on payment of high prices in pigs regulated according to the elongation of their tusks, without which payment not even the smallest element of ritual or artistic culture may be acquired by those not having previously possessed it.

New forms of the rite introduced from Lawor and Bot-walim.

This custom in turn enormously enhances the commercial importance of prestige, and itself largely results from the extraordinary mixture of cultures existing in these islands. For it is a fact well known to the inhabitants of every Malekulan village that hardly a single element of megalithic culture is indigenous. Every village has its own stories of where such and such an element of culture came from, and in the Small Islands it is known for a considerable number of generations back precisely what individual "bought" it and from where.

I have already mentioned the acquiring of the highest ranks in the megalithic hierarchy in South-West Bay from the village of Lambumbu some twenty miles up the coast. For the Small Islands the centre of distribution of innumerable new forms of ritual during the past eight generations has been the two villages of Lawor and Bot-walim which formerly flourished on the Malekulan mainland opposite Wala, but are now extinct owing to the bloody fighting that resulted from the first

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PLATE VI

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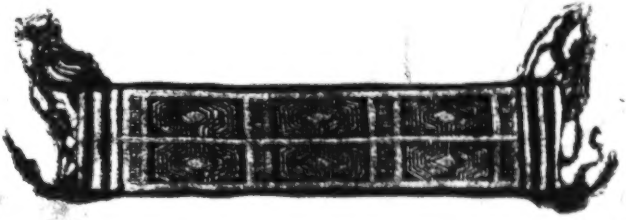

3. Dancing-mat obtained from Oba (see p. 523). (*Speiser*, 3, *Plate* 74, *Fig.* 4)

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2. Money-mat (*mangau*). (*Speiser*, 3, *Plate* 75, *Fig.* 6)

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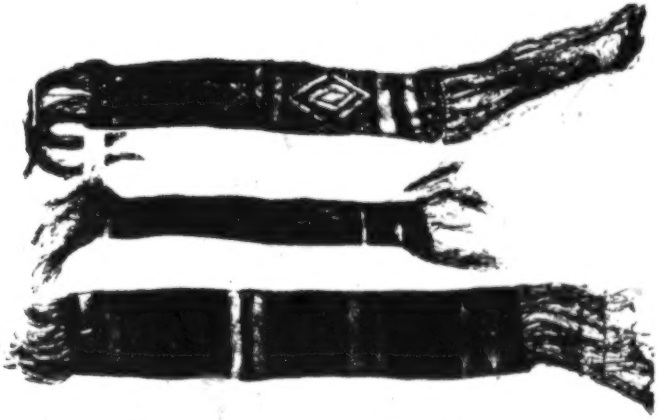

1. Plaited penis-wrappers from East Malekula and Raga. (*Speiser*, 3, *Plate* 43, *Figs.* 11, 12, 13)

[facing p. 43]

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stories of men who have acquired such superlatively high Maki rank—there are none living now—that they have been strong enough, not without raising such storms in the community as almost to wreck it, to break the taboo and re-establish, for themselves alone, spiritual contact with the mother's milk by eating from the same fire as women.[1] Such men who have completed the circle between childhood and divinity are regarded with awe and terror as being almost equal to ghosts.

It is well, therefore, to wait until the meal is over, the pipes lighted,[2] and, with the gathering twilight lit up by moon and stars and by the smouldering fire, to approach with some casual appropriate remark and then sit down and listen, not with the head only, but, as the natives say, the "belly," or what we should call the heart.

Debates.

Another type of meeting from which women are excluded but which the circumspect stranger may attend is that of the debates, which in fine weather are held in the dancing-ground or in wet weather in the *ghamal*. These are described by Godefroy [3] as being either "small" debates, which are a kind of communal recreation when a little is said about everything, or "grand" debates, announced by the sounding of gongs. Such "grand" debates are held only on important occasions, when, for example, a woman has eloped or some insult has been perpetrated against one of the influential members of the clan, or else to announce the date of some rite, or because certain old men wish to summon an offender before this the only tribunal that exists.

If held in the dancing-ground, each member of the clan takes his place at the correct spot indicated by his rank. The oldest members take up their position on the Upper Side, close to the gongs; if there are five or six of them, they squat on their heels, in the form of a square; three paces behind, towards the middle of the ground, sit those one rank inferior to that of the old men; yet further off, and separated by the same distance from those superior to them, are a group of young men; finally, that of the older boys. All speak in a low voice, though the elders talk rather more loudly than the rest. They discuss the subject of their meeting.

[1] The story of one such will be told in a later volume on Atchin.

[2] A European innovation, hand-maiden of the trader who, by creating this artificial craving which occupies some of the native's surplus energy now that his work in the gardens has been so notably lightened by the introduction of iron, has established a tobacco-currency which, as the natives themselves despairingly say, "goes up in smoke," and must be eternally renewed, for the white man's profit.

[3] Godefroy, 1, 1933, pp. 40-1. The word for these debates in his spelling is *sisilakuarean*, from the verb *sisilakuar*. The Atchin equivalent is the verb *tsil-tsilewere*, whence on that island I had conferred on me the half-joking title of Melteg-tsilewere on account of my long sessions with informants. (Melteg is one of the titles conferred on men of high rank in the Maki, see pp. 289, 432.)

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SECULAR USE OF PIGS

231 It will be seen, from the large number of terms, that the rearing of tusked pigs plays a large part in native life. The extent to which this occupation does in fact engross the natives' time and thought, and the intense emotion accompanying it, are matters which it is difficult to convey to one who has not actually witnessed them.

Let us take first the outward manifestations in everyday life of the importance attached to these animals. In the first place, though there is a considerable amount of spare ground on the island on which cultivation could take place, this is not used, since sows with their young and as yet untusked progeny wander at will wherever they wish, scouring the ground for roots and other food.[1] For this reason, also, every man is obliged to surround his house-enclosure with a high wall, to keep them out.

If we enter the enclosure, a very different sight meets our eyes. Here a man keeps his own pigs, tied by one of their forelegs, in sties almost as well built as his own house, to protect them from the weather and from the heat of the sun, the direct rays of which they cannot endure, or, even, in the case of an old man with a high-grade tusker, in the rear portion of his dwelling. Here his own sows and small pigs are fed and tended by his wife, and the tusked boars with the leavings of his own meals, or with the very finest puddings specially cooked, often with magical ingredients to promote the growth of tusks over which spells have been uttered. Details of such tending will be given in a future volume on Atchin.

Tusked boars the chief native article of currency.

436 The next point to force its attention on even the most casual student of Small Island culture is the fact that pigs are money. Strings of shell-beads, such as are used further north, are here used only as ornaments, and feather money, such as is used in Santa Cruz, and to a lesser extent in the Banks Islands and in Malo,[2] is here unknown. In the Small

[1] A benefit incidental to their scavenging tendencies is humorously described by Godefroy, who says (1, 1934, p. 49):

"One must not complain too bitterly about these marauders, for they render a great service in the matter of public hygiene, since it is they who clear up all droppings, particularly those of man. Sometimes, in fact, the latter has the greatest difficulty in defending himself against these too zealous scavengers: before taking up his squatting position he will do well to arm himself with sundry missiles with which to keep off his more importunate visitors, unless he is willing to run the risk of being upturned by a too eager snout. The natives have found one solution to this very real difficulty when satisfying the demands of nature by squatting on low branches of trees. In this way, both parties are satisfied. . . ."

The difficulty for the native is not only one of hygiene, which in his eyes is of secondary importance, but of defence against sorcery. Since for a sorcerer what comes out of a man is the most valuable material on which to work his spells, the scavenger is here doubly useful.

[2] Speiser, 3, p. 273.

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Islands of Malekula there are only two forms of currency, pigs and mats. The mats in question are a special kind called *mangau*[1] (see Plate VI), henceforth referred to as money-mats, made of long strips of plaited material 6 to 8 inches wide, dyed red on a yellow base, with very long fringes on either side. Each mat is rolled up tightly, tied round with a strip of coconut husk, and normally kept hanging in the owner's house, with the long fringes hanging loose. Once rolled, they are never undone, and pass as small currency and complimentary gifts from hand to hand till the long fringes gradually become worn away and the mat finally becomes worthless and must be replaced.[2] These form the small change of native currency. The capital currency is pigs.

Pig currency is based, not on the animal's size or the state of its flesh, but exclusively on the elongation of its tusks. For this reason, sows are not used as currency. Nor is the tusk of a dead boar of any commercial value.[3] For it must be remembered that the prime value of the boar is as a sacrificial animal, and its ultimate worth rests exclusively on this fact, and on the rise in rank that a man achieves through sacrifice. As will be seen later, this rise in rank is exactly correlated with the size of the tusks of the sacrificed boar, and it is on this fact that the graded system is built up. When sacrificed, the tusked jaws of the victims are displayed on booths and otherwise hung up for the admiration of all comers and for the greater honour of the sacrificer. At a yet later stage, when the booths have been dismantled, the sacrificer may extract one of the tusks and wear it on his wrist as a memorial of his exploit. Such display, however, is merely a matter of record and personal vanity, and has no other practical object, since the boar's value as such has ceased once its main object in the eyes of the natives has been achieved, namely its sacrifice and the resulting rise in rank bestowed on the sacrificer. The whole value of the pig lies in its function as a prospective victim. For this reason, a dead boar, or its tusks, are valueless as currency. It is the live pig only that is valued, in proportion to the length of its tusks.

The reason for this, and the means by which the tusked boar is itself

[1] Equivalent to the North Raga *bwana* (Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 385). In Vao they are used also for wrapping up the dead, whence Speiser accounts for their value (see p. 542, note). These mats are quite distinct from the ordinary sleeping-mats called *betura* and the fine mats called *to-mbagha*. For the use of mats as currency elsewhere see Codrington, 3, p. 323, and Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 443.

[2] Specimens of similar money-mats from Atchin are to be seen in the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and of Ethnology, Layard Collection, Nos. 179 and 181. In that island they are called *ni-mbwen*, the same word as is used for women's mourning-caps. The material from which they are made is strips of pandanus fibre, rather coarser than that used for wearing apparel, and, like the wearing apparel, they are dyed yellow and red with conventionalised designs. No. 181, when unrolled, proved to be 9 feet long. The fringes of a good new mat will hang as much as 3 feet down on either side.

[3] Pigs' jaw-bones are, however, used as currency in the Torres Islands (Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 460).

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436 invested with the sanctity which it will later, as victim, pass on to the
435 sacrificer, will be gone into below.[1] What we are at present concerned with is the overt value of the future victim, while yet alive, as an article of currency.

Rates of exchange based on the elongation of tusks.

The system of exchange is based on the first three of the four main grades of pig already listed, namely crescent-tusker, curved-tusker and re-entrant-tusker. Circle-tuskers are not used as currency, since they are too sacred to exchange and hold in their own lives the possibility of conferring on their owners, with due ritual, the highest rank in the Maki rite, which no man would forgo. The rates of exchange are worked out in great detail, pigs rising rapidly in value with the increased size of their tusks and at the same time the increased risk of their going sick and dying. For, precisely as the exchange may be regulated, the pigs are, after all, alive, and life implies death. In our own system of metal currency there is always the possibility of base coins, so that, in certain circles, a wise man will ring his shilling on the desk to test its worth. In trading with pigs, such questions are ever present, as the pig must not only be valued according to the size of its tusks, but also according to its likelihood of life. This question is not quite so serious as might at first sight appear, since sacrifices of every kind are so frequent, and the number of victims so great, that a weakly pig may always be selected for sacrifice and a strong one kept back for a future occasion. But the question is nevertheless always present in every bargain, so that a man will increase his wealth not only by judicious rearing and lending, but also by his good judgment as to the health of the animals that pass through his hands.

Subject to such considerations, the rates of exchange are well known and generally accepted in any one district. As these were worked out by me on Atchin, where I also recorded numerous actual transactions, as well as the technical terms accompanying them, I shall reserve a detailed exposition of the system for a future volume on that island.[2]

Pigs as payment.

436 The uses of the pig as an object of currency are too numerous for it to be possible to give here anything like a complete account. The Index at the end of the book will give some idea of the manifold transactions that take place. Definite payments include the enormous sums in tusked pigs paid as bride-price and the lesser sums previously paid to the

[1] See p. 257.

[2] The reader interested in rates of exchange may be referred to the table given in Deacon, 4, p. 196. According to this it will be seen, among other things, that in Lambumbu a pig (No. 5 in his list) corresponding in my terminology to "crescent-tusker" possesses about one-seventh of the value of a circle-tusker. Harrisson (2, p. 25) records that in Matanavat 40 pigs with the "tusk just sprouting," i.e. corresponding roughly with the Vao *bo ruhule*, might be of the same value as 1 circle-tusker.

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bride's people on the occasion of betrothal and by a man to his wife's people for each child of the marriage; to a man's "friends" in other villages in compensation for his death; by a dying man to his own sons for the due carrying out of certain crucial portions of his mortuary rites; to the chief mortuary official, and to the man who impersonated the dead man in the mortuary drama staged on his grave; to experts (craftsmen and magicians) for such skilled work as hollowing out slit gongs or attaching the outriggers to sea-going canoes; to makers of wind and rain; to sorcerers and to those who possess knowledge of how to make crops grow, to cure illness or to make love magic or magic for every kind of ritual or secular purpose. Besides these, there are the pigs paid by those performing the Maki rite to their fathers for erecting the stones and to their mothers' brothers for conferring on them their new names; or to take one such example among many, by those making a new sea-going canoe to the last owners of the canoe which the new one replaces. Pigs are also paid as compensation for adultery and other offences that might otherwise lead to bloodshed or even war. Over and above these are the definite payments made for the few articles of foreign trade, chief among which are the packets of turmeric leaves obtained from Malo and used as a base in the dyeing of all plaited articles of apparel such as men's penis-wrappers and women's skirts, of money-mats and sails.

Pigs as gifts.

Slightly differentiated from these definite payments, which are all the subject of previous bargaining, are the gifts of live pigs made to all workers in the numerous ritual and semi-ritual activities that make life hum in the Small Islands: for example, the gifts made to those who drag up from the reef the coral blocks destined to become the dolmens and monoliths in the Maki rites, or do the hard work of felling and transporting tree trunks for the construction of sea-going canoes or for the centre-posts of a *ghamal*; to workers and dancers who come from other villages; and to all those from other villages who render any practical or ritual service. The pigs given on these occasions, though regulated by custom, are definitely regarded as gifts for services rendered, and are not the subject of previous bargaining.

"Presentation pigs" due from a man to his wife's people.

The most spectacular of all pig transactions are, however, the ritual presentations that a man is bound to make to his wife's parents on each and every important ceremonial occasion. These presentations may be regarded as an extension of the original payment for his wife. They constitute, in fact, the lifelong debt which a man never ceases from paying, and which can never be finally discharged except by death. This obligation is a source of endless resigned and wistful complaint. It is the never-

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436 ceasing toll levied by the group from which a man has taken his wife,
437 and if he has more than one wife, there will be correspondingly as many groups, or, if a second wife is taken from the same group, the toll is doubled.

These presentations are officially regarded as gifts, but they are gifts from which there is no escape, and are the subject of endless bargaining, since they are regulated by a system of exchange gifts on the part of the wife's people to the son-in-law which take place publicly on certain ritual occasions. These, and the ritual accompanying the presentation, will be described later.[1] It is enough to mention here that the exchange presentation made by the wife's people to the son-in-law is never so large as that made by him to them, so that the balance is for ever in favour of them. As the wife's parents die, and as their place is taken by her brother and, later still, her brother's son, the value of the presentation due from her husband tends to decrease, owing to the relative ages and importance of the protagonists. Therefore, the older a man gets, the less he is liable to be forced to give away. Moreover, by this time he will have daughters of his own, from whose husbands he exacts the highest possible grades of tusked pig, and to whom he gives the minimum he can by way of exchange. In this way pigs tend to accumulate in the hands of the older men, and it is chiefly through this mechanism of official presentations from a man to his wife's people that the old men retain their preponderance of power.

Loans.

436 Of equal importance in the economic system as payments, gifts and
426 presentations is the practice of letting pigs out on loan. We have already seen how, for example, on a man's marriage all his near patrilineal clansmen assist in providing the bride-price. The same system of inter-family loans obtains with respect to almost every enterprise a man sets his hand to. Under any of the circumstances listed above, or on any of the yet more numerous occasions not mentioned in which a man needs pigs, his kinsmen on both sides of his family including his mother's, and in particular his mother's brother, will, if needed and if they can afford it, assist with loans. In the case of pigs supplied by a man to his own son, particularly in such an essential matter as marriage, the loan need not be repaid. In the same way, a man will occasionally forgo repayment from a younger brother. In all other circumstances, however, a loan is strictly a loan, and must be repaid with interest. The interest in this case is calculated on the amount the loaned animal's tusks would have grown between the time of borrowing and of repayment. As repayment rarely follows quickly, by the time the debtor is called to book there is plenty of room for doubt as to the exact length of tusk to be made up.

[1] See pp. 303 ff.

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Even when this is agreed, the debtor may not possess a pig of the exact required grade. This leads to fresh transactions with yet other relatives, in which the debtor seeks to exchange such smaller pigs as he possesses against the single larger one demanded of him. In this way the ball rolls on. One transaction leads to another. Every pig-owner, that is to say every male adult, has pigs out on loan and is himself also a debtor to others. No man ever sees all his own pigs around him till the day of his death, when the final effort is made to regulate his affairs. Then, debtors and creditors assemble at his house and, if the latter are lucky and the dying man solvent, a just settlement takes place. If not, the debts are handed on to his successors. No loan is ever forgotten, and, with the additional factor of the uncertain prospect of life of any given pig, the complications never end. Every native complains that he has been cheated of value by others, and disputes leading to the forcible detention, or even the theft, of pigs are not infrequent. Given such a system, and the retentive memories of the natives, it is a tribute to the general common sense of the community and to the solidarity of kinsfolk—for it is only among close kinsfolk that extensive borrowing takes place—that such scenes are not more common than they are.

Sea-voyages for trade in pigs.

This short review of the commercial value of pigs has so far been confined within the precincts of Vao and of the neighbouring Small Islands and villages of the adjacent Malekulan mainland, where, owing to intermarriage, a Vao man's maternal kinsfolk often dwell. Perhaps the most striking evidence of the great value attached to them, of the great labour willingly undertaken to preserve and increase the stock, and of the risks endured to prosecute this end, is that of the sea-voyages organised almost exclusively for the sake of obtaining fresh supplies, to make up for the loss caused by the sacrifice of immense numbers of tusked pigs during the course of innumerable rites. The construction and consecration of these sea-going canoes, by means of yet further sacrifice, will be described in a separate chapter.[1] Apart from the trade in turmeric leaves, obtained from the islands of Malo and Santo in return for pigs, and in a few other objects, such as special kinds of bark brought home from Ambrim for the construction of high-grade bark-board belts, also paid for with pigs, and in fine dancing-aprons used in a special kind of dance which are obtained from Oba, the sole commercial object of these voyages is the purchase of fresh stocks of pigs. Whatever the original use of these great canoes—and it is certain that they were, among other things, the vessels by means of which some portion at least of the ancestors of the existing population arrived on Vao—it is the trade in pigs that is now the prime object of their manufacture. For this purpose the immense labour of building them is

[1] Chapter XVII.

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439 undertaken, large numbers of tusked pigs are sacrificed in order to consecrate them, and the effect of this consecration is to make them taboo to
484 women. In them the natives sail to all the large islands of the Northern
[501] New Hebrides, to Ambrim, Raga, Oba, Maewo, Malo and Santo. The chief sources of pigs are Ambrim and South Raga. Oba is chiefly visited on account of its reputation as the Land of Ta-ghar and for the special initiation rite performed there, but the trade in pigs with this island is now slight owing to its recent depopulation. Maewo, also known as the home of Ta-ghar, is now rarely visited. The trade with Malo and Santo is with pigs and turmeric leaves.

Voyages to the southern and eastern islands are usually made by night, the canoes leaving Vao in the late afternoon, and arriving at their destination some time during the following morning. Here they may stay anything up to five days, and then wait for a fair wind to take them home. The days are spent in bargaining. Emotion runs high, and there are many records of fights arising out of disputes, in some of which the visitors manage to save themselves, but in others they are slain and in most cases eaten. Individual accounts of such voyages as undertaken from Atchin will be given in a later volume.

To such lengths will the natives go to keep up their supply of pigs.

Value of tusked boars in terms of English money.

435 Before seeking the underlying reason for this passionate search, one
436 more fact may be mentioned to show the immense value attached to these animals. During the time of my visit there was but little European money
434 in the Small Islands, acquired chiefly by means of the very few wages earned by the indentured labour undertaken by some of the younger men on white men's plantations, supplemented by the selling of a little copra to passing white men's trading-vessels. The amount of money thus made is not very great. What they do make is partly spent in buying white men's goods, such as an occasional singlet or piece of corrugated iron, partly saved up to buy whalers which now replace the sea-going canoes I have just mentioned, and partly used for trading among themselves, in which case it usually replaces their own money-mats. Pigs are not often sold for money, but when this does happen, the prices they fetch
435 are such as to astound the white man, who fails to understand what it is all about. Thus, when I was on Atchin, prices averaged:

For a crescent-tusker	.	about £4 [1]
,, curved-tusker	.	,, £6
,, re-entrant-tusker	.	,, £10, £12 or £15
,, circle-tusker	.	from £30 upwards.

[1] Deacon (4, p. 391), six years later, cites a crescent-tusker in Seniang, there called *mbong mwûs*, as being worth £5, with corresponding prices for pigs of lower grade.